

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A common platform is used in conjunction with a host computer to control various equipment sensors that perform different functions. In one aspect, the common platform is a micro-controller board, the host computer is a personal computer (PC), and the equipment sensors comprise an add-on card and a sensor for use in automotive services. A universal serial bus (USB) or an RS232 interface used for the common platform communicates with the host computer and with the equipment sensors. The common platform is a plug and play board that, once attached to the host computer, operates with little or no human intervention. The common platform is capable of accommodating various equipment sensors that are run by various appropriate application software. Further, the common platform can run under different operation power sources. In one aspect, these power sources include a power source embedded in the common platform, an RS232 power source, and a power source external to the common platform, such as a battery.